

2.1 The Print Effect

"In purely spatial media, like print, a temporal dimension can sometimes be translated into spatial relationships" (Mollerup 74).

Mollerup argues that print has two dimensions – width and height. He further states: "Embossing and punching out are impossible or inappropriate in most print formats" (74). Such techniques would add a third dimension (depth) to the logo or trademark in print. He continues: "Printed trademarks have no temporal dimension", in other words they are *static* (74). According to Mollerup the logo or trademark is defined as a two dimensional concept which reflects the general characteristics of print. It is *static* and two dimensional reflecting the material conditions of the print medium in which it is commonly applied. Mollerup thus denies the concept of the trademark or logo a temporal dimension condemning it to a *static* state.

A good example of a designer who acknowledges the possibility for *dynamics* in the concept of a logo or trademark is Malcolm Grear. In an interview with Gregory Thomas, Grear says: "I like to think that we never design a logotype, which may include a symbol or icon, in a vacuum. All types of applications must be considered - large, small, 3D and possibly 4D, embossed, de-embossed, engraved, animated and in many cases for use on everything from billboards and architectural signs (sometimes neon) to lapel pins and Web sites. In other words, it's very often not just a stationary [*static*] system." Grear continues: "Web-based design is fantastic in terms of a tool for applications: we can rotate, animate, make dimensional studies, we can move around and under things, we can deal with time [*dynamics*]" (Thomas 133). Grear clearly takes the position that the logo should "move with the times" – so to speak – he suggests that the logo concept should reflect the conditions of possibility afforded by the medium to which it is applied. He mentions the possibility for logo "animation" and clearly sees the web as a "fantastic" environment where "we can rotate,

animate, make dimensional studies, we can move around and under things, we can deal with time”.

It is clear that Mollerup and Gear do not share the same concept of the logo or trademark. One may argue that Mollerup focuses only on the trademark and Gear only on the logo and that the division between *static* and *dynamic* attributes of the concepts (pointed out above) is due to misrecognition on the part of this project to conflate the two. It seems plausible until one compares Lisa Silver's writing on the logo and realizes that her position is akin to Mollerup although her book *logo Design That Works: The Secrets of Successful logo Design* clearly deals with the logo – whether it is a legally registered trademark or not. Silver treats the concept logo as static and two dimensional. Like Mollerup Silver offers only one case history where ‘animation’ is applied for Fusion.com (139). The letters ‘F’ and ‘U’ morph into the Fusion.com logo. Also like Mollerup she states the logo must offer the possibility for animation. It seems that there is a basic division between the authors on logo or trademark and that the division cannot be traced to the legal status of the logo as trademark but around the *static* or *dynamic* attributes of a concept which drifts under the influence of every author it encounters.

It is common to find the logo or trademark on Web sites today. The majority of the logos and trademarks on the Web are static. The computer screen is two dimensional like print, but it also a *dynamic* surface with an inherent temporal (a fourth) dimension. When a logo or trademark is applied to the Web it may or may not reflect the *dynamic* or temporal attributes of the computer screen. There may be certain conditions under which it may be appropriate to translate temporal dimensions into temporal relationships instead of treating the Web as a printed surface where temporal dimensions are sometimes translated into spatial relationships as Mollerup suggests. We may say if such cases exist in logo or trademark design - where the latter visual solution is applied instead of the former - that the visual solution arrived at is print effected not Web effected.

The *print effect* is defined as the use of static visual effects to represent dynamic visual attributes on the Web. Such static visual effects are produced by applying techniques - in the rendering of an image - which are commonly used for acts of visual mediation supported by print technology.

As a point of departure Figure 2.1. can be described as *print effected* - on the Web - while figure 2.2. is not.



Figure 2.1. Static, tumbling, target icon (<http://www.hixo.com> local [Webarchive/HIXO.htm](http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/20060601000000/http://www.hixo.com)).



Figure 2.2. Dynamic, wink, animated eye icon (<http://www.hixo.com> local [Webarchive/HIXO.htm](http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/20060601000000/http://www.hixo.com)).

The problem identified as the *print effect* - as it is encountered on the Web - exists because it is possible to use *static rendering techniques* to represent dynamic visual properties as illustrated by figure 2.1. while it is also possible to employ *dynamic rendering techniques* to represent dynamic visual properties on the Web as illustrated by figure 2.2.

In these two cases (figure 2.1. and figure 2.2.) both icons appear in the same Web 'page' designed for Hixo. Both of these icons represent dynamic visual properties but the techniques used to render them visible are based on entirely different schemes. In order to visually contextualise the application of figure 2.1.

and figure 2.2. as they are found on the Web, figure 2.3. is offered. Figure 2.3. represents a copy – represented here on paper - of the icons as they appear in their 'original visual relationship' on the Web site. The icons have a dual role which will be acknowledged but not analysed further; they represent a H, I, X and O which spell the company name. It is their dynamic properties which are the focus of this analysis.



Figure 2.3. Hixo main menu icons (<http://www.hixo.com> or local Webarchive/HIXO.htm).

Figure 2.1. is an example of a *static rendering* technique employed to represent dynamic visual properties. The target symbol in appears to be tumbling – which is a dynamic visual property – but it is not *dynamically rendering* the apparent motion. It appears visually *static* on the Web site. Instead the designer has left it up to the viewers to “re-create in our minds an inevitable course of action” – through what Alan Pipes terms “kinetic empathy”¹. This technique is termed *Anticipated Motion* and was employed by Titian in his altarpiece *Assumption of the Virgin* (*Assumption of the Virgin*, 1515-18. Oil on panel, 22’ 5” x 11’ 10” (5.9 x 3.5 m). S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice). Titian’s painting gives the impression that the Virgin Mary is ascending into heaven although it makes use of a *static rendering* technique (in painting) employed to represent the dynamic visual properties of ascension. Many other examples exist in art and

¹ *Kinetic Empathy* - Where the viewer consciously or unconsciously re-creates or anticipates a sense of impending movement from a pose observed in an art work (Pipes 255).

graphic design where other techniques aimed at achieving similar visual effects are used. Such techniques include - but are not limited to – anticipated motion, repeated figures, multiple images, motion blur and others.

In figure 2.2. the eye icon images are placed side by side in order to illustrate the technique employed on paper, but on the Web site these frames replace each other over time and within the same space. The visual effect in this case is *dynamic* – the eye apparently winks at the viewer. The fact that this report is forced to employ a static visual technique (termed “multiple images” by Pipes) to illustrate a dynamic visual technique – not the technique itself – which is used on Hixo’s Web site is proof that the conditions of possibility offered by the Web and the printed page are not the same. Figure 2.2. on the Web appears to be alive, dynamic and its dynamic visual effects (winks) are timed to create anticipation before the sequence of frames repeats (loops) again. The impact of the visual effect is quite surprising considering it is such a small black and white icon. This technique is known as “key frame animation”, but like the previous example is not the only technique able to render dynamic visual effects in order to represent dynamic visual properties in the Web. Whether we are employing ‘new media’ in general or the Web specifically, movement can be represented employing techniques such as key framing, interpolation or tweening, algorithmic expression, inverse kinematics, using data sets from motion capture, real-time transcoding, and many more which are all reliant on the *dynamic rendering* ability of the computer and its display technology.

The icons in Hixo’s (Web site) main menu (see figure 2.3.) represent examples of both techniques described and in this case both techniques are applied within the same visual space. Only the eye icon is *dynamically rendered* (constructed from multiple images) while the other icons are *statically rendered* (single images).

This particular example was chosen to illustrate the coexisting reality of two entirely different visual strategies (or visual schemas) in the Web – (1) a

strategy employing *spatially based techniques* and (2) a strategy employing *time based techniques*. This report will constantly refer to the application of these two strategies along with the methods, techniques, propositions and “token”s (Eco 127) they produce.

Although it is acknowledged that both *statically* and *dynamically rendered* visual effects described above are useful and indeed ubiquitous in the Web, the techniques which produce such visual effects are in general exclusively applied to certain types of Web “token”s. An example of such exclusivity is the number of logos which are constructed using static visual effects and the number of Web Banners constructed using dynamic visual effects. Even a casual review of Web sites will confirm that the majority of Web logos are static “token”s while the majority of Web Banners are dynamic “token”s. Postulating the *print effect* theory does not misrecognise this condition. This study argues *print effect* describes a special case of static “token” which qualifies to be redefined as a dynamic “token” in the Web under certain conditions.

It will be argued that the print logo’s designer has only one class of rendering options when employing print visual technologies: she can only render it statically; and that the Web logo’s designer has at least two classes of rendering options: she can render it statically or dynamically. It will further be argued that the Web logo’s designer could extend the scope of the ‘visual language’ by choosing to render it dynamically, thus exploiting the conditions of possibility offered by the Web. This implies that the Web logo designer is free to exploit the Web as an enabling “visual technology” as Bolter and Grusin prefer to call it (135).

2.2 The Print Effectuated logo: A closer view

As mentioned earlier the *print effect* is the result of a special case which occurs when cultural “token”s make the transition from print enabled ‘media’ to Web enabled ‘media’.

The *print effect* can be said to exist whenever the following conditions are all present: (1) there is a visible “token”; (2) this “token” is defined as a sign intended to represent or signify the dynamic visual properties of something else; (3) this “token” was defined through a practice enabled by static visual technologies (such as print) where static visual effects are employed to render it visible; (4) an opportunity to apply this “token” in a dynamic visual technology (like the Web) arises; (5) this dynamic visual technology (such as the Web) enables both static and dynamic visual effects to render images (such as this “token”) visible. If all of the aforementioned conditions are present and the “token” is rendered visible using static visual effects only (in the dynamic visual technology) then, and only then, can we say that this is a case of the *print effect* in logo design practice.

To determine the validity of a case of the *print effect* on the Web the following questions must be answered: (1) is there a “token” which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? (2) was this “token” defined in a practice enabled by a visual technology (such as print) where static visual effects were used to render it visible? (3) is this “token” rendered visible in the Web? (4) is the “token” rendered visible in the Web using a static visual effect only? A case of the print effect only exists if all the answers to all the above-mentioned questions are affirmative.

In order to prove the *print effect* exists and to show counter examples, five case studies from *Logo Design That Works* by Lisa Silver were chosen. According to Silver she selected logo designs which where “practical, meaningful and offer, it is hoped, sheer pleasure”² in their solutions (Silver 11).

2.2.1 Smash TV

² It may well be argued as Gregory Thomas does that the pleasure derived from viewing a static logo is derived from a “game” which the viewer plays to translate the static visual effects into dynamic visual understanding. This “game” may well be one of the elements which keeps the logo static on the Web.

SmashTV is a company that creates Web cast programming for children. Silver's analysis of the logo is: "Nicknamed "Hammerhead" the logo depicts a prim, suit-clad man, whose head is a raised hammer. The mark uses wry humor to convey a message of creative rebellion" (Silver 94).



Figure 2.4.1 SmashTV logo (Silver 94).



Figure 2.4.2 SmashTV Web site: <http://www.smashtv.com/> or local [Webarchive/SmashTV.htm](http://www.web.archive.org/web/20000901000000/http://www.smashtv.com/)).

Designer and collage artist John Borruso hoped to create a logo that would reflect the creative energy of SmashTV, but at the same time soften the name which could be mistaken as aggressive rather than irreverent (94). "He began by creating collages based on old-fashioned television sets. One consisted of a TV set with "SmashTV" splashed across its screen; another depicted a TV surrounded

by an eye-popping starburst pattern reminiscent of the hard-sell ads of electronic stores" (94). These early solutions did not work because they were not distinctive enough according to Silver. An important point to note is the process which Borruso was following. He focussed on one of the two words in the name of the company – "TV" – then he proceeded to 'translate' the concept into several visualisations or preliminary visual collages. "TV" functioned as a theme for the entire visualisation process. Borruso established a context for the public message which the visual identity intends to send to its clients. This context functions as an overall concept of the visual identity. When this emphasis on "TV" did not work, he shifted his focus to the other word in the company name – "Smash" – again placing it at the centre of the conceptualisation and visualisation process. Focussing on the word "Smash" led to an investigation into the visual possibilities to represent "the act of creative rebellion". "In his collection of old tool manuals and vintage magazines, Borruso found a photo of a hand holding a hammer which evoked the word "smash", and another of a man clad in a suit, which suggested a business executive. Using Photoshop and Illustrator to combine them, Borruso found the result to be a bold and yet playful illustration of rebellion" (94). Borruso says: "The potential aggression of the upraised hammer is tempered by the figure. He is prim. His hands are folded behind his back. So the result is humorous rather than aggressive." See figure 2.4.1.

The visual solution Borruso found was to pacify the aggression of the word "Smash" with an image of a businessman with his hands clasped behind his back. This passive gesture or pose is very powerful when contrasted with the image of the hammer. The hammer signifying dynamic/aggressive action and the posture signifying static/reserved non-action. The tension between the two potential actors – the man and the hammer – creates a mental game which is quite intriguing and satisfying for the viewer. Such visual 'puzzles' are frequently the source of the success of simple visual statements which are often also the basis of successful logo design.

It is not clear whether Borruso was in any way involved with the Web site design produced for SmashTV (<http://www.smashtv.com/>).

The crucial choice related to the *print effect* is to render the logo “token” as a static “token” or a dynamic “token” on the Web. The choice of the Web designer was to maintain its static appearance (See figure 2.4.2 and <http://www.smashtv.com/>). The question that should be posed here is; does the SmashTV Web logo “token” represent a case of the *print effect*? To determine that we refer to the definition presented earlier:

To determine the validity of a case of the *print effect* on the Web the following questions must be answered: (1) is there a “token” which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? (2) was this “token” defined in a practice enabled by a visual technology such as print where static visual effects were used to render it visible? (3) is this “token” rendered visible in the Web? (4) is the “token” rendered visible in the Web using a static visual effect only? If the answers to all the above-mentioned questions are affirmative then and only then the *print effect* can be said to have occurred.

(1) Is there a “token” which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? – there is a “token” but it does not represent dynamic visual attributes of something else – in fact it plays with the idea of the tension between dynamic and static – aggressive and passive. Having failed this test of it is clear that this case does not qualify as a *print effected* logo design on the Web.

We must conclude that it could never qualify as a case of the *print effect*, if we understand the dynamic between the image of the hammer and the image of the businessman. It could be argued that, even if the Web designer was confident and capable of dynamically rendering the potential action of the hammer, such a dynamic rendering would force a re-conceptualisation of the logo “token” and, would not be consistent with the intention of Borruso which clearly was to pacify the harsh action implied by using the image of the hammer in this logo “token”. Thus the lack of dynamic rendering in the case of the SmashTV Web

logo “token” is not analysed as an oversight or inability on the part of the Web designer, but a congruent application of the passive attributes intended by the print logo designer.

2.2.2 Action Figure

According to Silver, Action Figure is an Austin-based design firm specialising in print and motion graphics. Matt Hovis, the designer, decided to express a visual pun³ on their company name when designing their company logo. In Silver’s analysis of Action Figure’s logo she states the following: “The logo features a circle containing silhouettes of two men and a woman standing with their feet firmly planted on the ground and arms dangling at their sides. A humorous take on the name “Action Figure” – there’s not much action, after all, in these figures – the logo reflects the playful approach the firm brings to its work.”

Applying the criteria for the diagnosis of the *print effect* we must ask: (1) is there a “token” which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? – the answer is clearly no, the logo represents non-action and passivity as a visual pun on both the name of the company as well as the trade (motion graphics) which they practice. As in the previous case study, having failed this test it is clear that the application of the Action Figure logo on the Web does not qualify as a *print effected* logo design on the Web (See figure 2.5.2).

³ It is interesting to note that evidence exists that such visual strategies were practiced as early as 1450 in the design of printers’ marks. According to Per Mollerup such pictorial devices (printers’ marks) were sometimes a visual pun on the printer’s name (35).

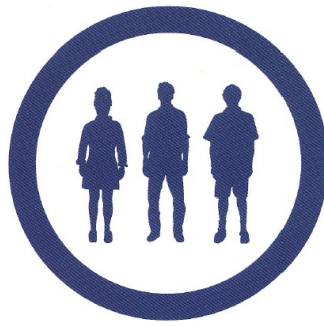
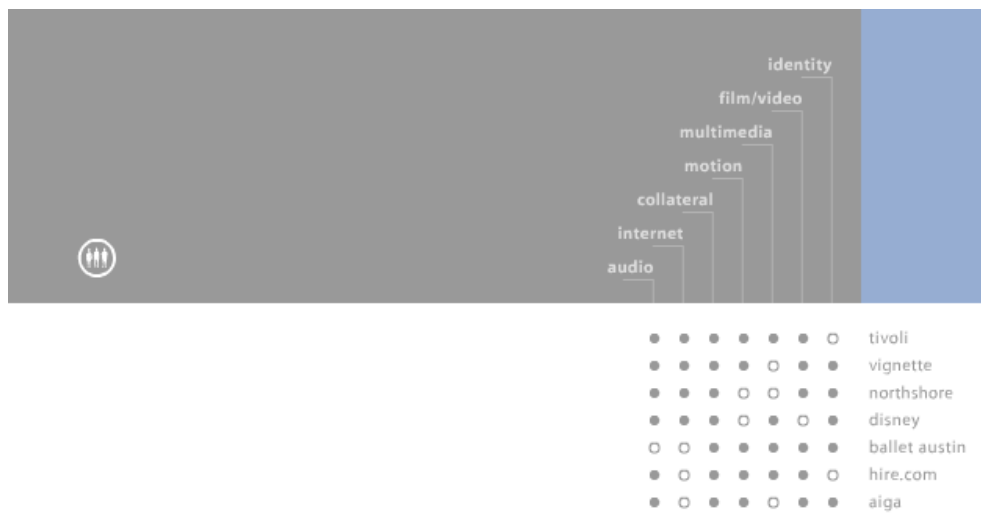


Figure 2.5.1 Action Figure logo (Silver 95).



// 03.11.2005 / [New website on its way. Oh boy is it gonna be cool!](#) // 02.28.2005 / [Action Figu](#)

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Figure 2.5.2 Action Figure Web site: <http://www.actionfigure.com/>

2.2.3 Experience Music Project

The Experience Music Project (EMP) is an interactive music museum in Seattle, Washington. Their logo design is the most radical case of the *print effect* found amongst Silver's case studies.

Silver's analysis of the logo states: "The logo, the museum's initials E, M, and P reversed-out from black, constantly changes form. The mark's fluidity mirrors the dynamic nature of music and reflects the endless interpretations music can invoke in listeners".

Again we ask the questions used to identify a case of the *print effect*: (1) is there a "token" which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? – yes, the logo "reflects the endless interpretations music can invoke in listeners". (2) Was this "token" defined in a practice enabled by a visual technology such as print where static visual effects were used to render it visible? – yes, it was defined in print using static visual effects, but more importantly it was rendered using the "multiple frames" technique on print which proves that it was already conceptualised as a dynamic logo. The print effect is normally identified to help argue for such re-conceptualisation. (3) Is this "token" rendered visible in the Web? – yes, it is, but only one frame of its initial design is found in the Web site. (4) Is the "token" rendered visible in the Web using a static visual effect only? – yes, the Web logo is rendered using only a static visual effect. Answering yes to all the criteria we can state that this is a case of the *print effect*.

The logo not only represents dynamic visual attributes of something else, but is also rendered using "multiple images" or "multiple frames", in order to visually express the dynamic attributes it represents. This rendering was produced on print but never applied in the Web (See figure 2.6.1 and 2.6.2).



Figure 2.6.1 EMP logo (Silver 135).



Figure 2.6.2 EMP Web site: <http://www.emplive.com/> or local [Webarchive/EMPlive.htm](http://www.webarchive.org/EMPlive.htm)).

2.2.4 Experience Music Project

According to Silver: "New Leaf manufactures and distributes paper made from recycled material. To reflect its intention of becoming a big player in the paper industry, New Leaf wanted a logo that felt corporate. And yet, to distinguish itself as being more environmentally responsible than its competitors, the client also hoped for a logo that had a natural feel. With these parameters in mind, designer Nathan Durrant created sketches based on the double meaning of the company's name: "leaf" refers both to plants and to pages. From these sketches emerged the idea of combining both meanings into a single image of a turning leaf." (21).

Silver's analysis states: "The logo, a white rectangle whose upper corner curls downward to reveal a photo of a leaf, is based on both the client's product and its mission. While the logo's shape suggests a sheet of paper, and the leaf the paper's recycled content, the mark's curled edge evokes the phrase "turning over a new leaf," which in this case refers to switching from non-biodegradable products to environmentally friendly ones".

(1) Is there a "token" which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? – yes, in this case the dynamic attributes expressed by the action of "turning over a new leaf". (2) was this "token" defined in a practice enabled by a visual technology such as print where static visual effects were used to render it visible? – yes, it was conceptualised first in sketches, then visually executed using a combination of photography and Photoshop editing. (3) is this "token" rendered visible in the Web? – yes, it is (<http://www.newleafpaper.com/>). (4) is the "token" rendered visible in the Web using a static visual effect only? – yes, the logo is statically composited into the top left corner of the Web site's navigational structure (See figure 2.7.2).

New Leaf's Web logo is definitely print effected. It represents the dynamic

visual attributes of an action, but renders it visible using static visual techniques.



Figure 2.7.1 New Leaf logo (Silver 21).



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Figure 2.7.2 New Leaf Web site: <http://www.newleafpaper.com/> or local [Webarchive/NewLeaf.htm](http://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/20060601000000/http://www.newleafpaper.com/)).

2.2.5 Movies.com

Movies.com is a Web site that provides information about feature films to a general audience. Silver's analysis of the logo is: "The logo, a lowercase m cut out of a triangular shape, evokes the spotlight created by a film projector shining over a row of seats in a darkened movie theater".

It is easy to imagine the scene; the dark theatre with the flickering light beam of the projector shining over the seats. It might be argued that the abstract nature of the final graphic execution does not attempt to literally represent the effect of the light. Even abstractly represented, the dynamic attributes of the experience described above could benefit from a dynamic re-conceptualisation which could change the current logo design.



Figure 2.8.1 Movies.com logo (Silver 15).



Figure 2.8.2 Movies.com Web site: <http://movies.go.com/>

(1) Is there a “token” which represents dynamic visual attributes of something else? – yes, because the concept of the logo is that of “a darkened movie theater” with “the spotlight created by a film projector shining over a row of seats”. It implies the flickering visual effect of the light in such a setting. (2)

was this “token” defined in a practice enabled by a visual technology such as print, where static visual effects were used to render it visible? – yes, it was created using Illustrator, a well known graphic design program widely used for print design. (3) is this “token” rendered visible in the Web? – yes, it is, and there is an important visible difference between the print and Web versions of the logo. The Web version is treated with a visual effect (highlight) which devaluates the intended visual metaphor (of the darkened room and flickering light) by making the logo look like a solid button or similar “token”. (4) Is the “token” rendered visible in the Web using a static visual effect only? – yes, it is rendered using only a static visual effect, while the special highlight effect mentioned detracts from the original intent of the designer. Thus having answered affirmative to all the criteria, we can say that the Movies.com Web logo is *print effected*. But it also suffers from special effects, contributing only to spectacle (eye candy) without reinforcing its central theme and concept.

2.2.6 Summary

In summary the five case studies presented support a brief overview of the problem defined as the *print effect*. This chapter offered a definition of the *print effect* phenomenon and a list of questions by which to identify its occurrence while illustrating - in the five case studies - what precisely is meant by the *print effect*.